

# ***BLM News***

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
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**DATE:** December 8, 2004  
**ELKO FIELD OFFICE:** 2005-09  
**FOR RELEASE:** December 8, 2004

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## **SENSITIVE BIRD SPECIES OPEN HOUSE SCHEDULED**

An open house will be held Thursday, January 6<sup>th</sup>, 2005, from 4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. at the BLM Elko Field Office, 3900 East Idaho Street, Elko, Nevada, to discuss the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for sensitive bird species on eleven grazing allotments in Elko County, Nevada. The public is invited to attend.

BLM is preparing the EIS in response to an order issued by Federal District Court (Nevada) Judge Howard McKibben in August 2004. The order was in response to a lawsuit filed by the Committee for Idaho's High Desert (now Committee for the High Desert) and Western Watersheds Project which appealed the final multiple use decisions for the Sheep Allotment Complex, Owyhee Allotment, and Big Springs Allotment.

The EIS will analyze the impacts of grazing to raptors (including burrowing owls) and sage grouse in the Sheep Allotment Complex and the Owyhee Allotment, and sage grouse in the Big Springs Allotment. The EIS will evaluate impacts to springs, seeps, riparian areas, upland habitat, and land use plans as they apply to these sensitive bird species.

The Sheep Allotment Complex includes nine grazing allotments, totaling 466,524 acres in the southeast corner of Elko County, south of the city of West Wendover, Nevada. The Big Spring Allotment totals 482,616 acres and is located north and west of the Sheep Complex. The Owyhee Allotment is in the northwest portion of Elko County and is 371,431 acres

A range of alternatives (including the no-action alternative) will be developed to address sensitive species defined in the Federal Court order and issues identified during the public scoping process. Mitigating measures will be considered to minimize environmental impacts and to assure the proposed action does not result in undue or unnecessary degradation of public lands.

The purpose of the open house is to give the public an opportunity to get more information and to voice any issues or concerns they want analyzed in the EIS. Federal, state and local agencies and other individuals or organizations who may be interested in or affected by the decisions in the

future EIS are invited to participate in the scoping process. In addition, information about this project is also available on the BLM Elko Field Office website (<http://www.nv.blm.gov/Elko>).

Written comments about the EIS may be sent prior to the open house and should be sent to: Ray Lister, BLM Elko Field Office, 3900 Idaho Street, Elko, Nevada 89801. All comments must be received by the close of business on January 21, 2005.

For questions or more information about the project, please contact Ray Lister by phone - (775) 753-0200, by email – [Ray\\_Lister@nv.blm.gov](mailto:Ray_Lister@nv.blm.gov)

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